

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A.

Price \$1.00 per year or ten cents a copy.

Ad. rates—1c per word, 25c per inch (about 30 words), Quarter page \$1.00, Half page \$1.75, Full page \$3.00. Display adverts., 50c per inch.

Four consecutive insertions for the price of three.

Vol. VII

December, 1938

No. 81



Reckless Ralph

GRAND CONFLAGRATION AT THE MUNRO PLANT IN 1876

Complete Destruction by fire of the publishing establishment of Norman L. Munro & Co., "The Family Story Paper," "The Weekly Story Teller," "The Boys of New York," and "Our Boys," completely burned out. And they still live.

"The Great Conflagration (Fire) at 28 and 30 Beekman Street, New York City, on February 3, 1876, the Burning of the Munro Block, appeared in The Sporting New Yorker, which is the continuation of The New Sensation, appeared on the front page, Vol. 6, No. 142, Feb. 26th, 1876. The picture on the front page shows the Munro Block all in flames. Clang, Clang, Clang, rang out the hoarse notes of the fire bells, in the still air of night, at about half past eleven o'clock in the evening of the second of February. "Fire?" The cry aroused the Fire Department to a sense of its duty, and before many minutes elapsed the engines came dashing down Beekman Street and it was discovered that the publishing house of N. L. Munro & Co., was in flames. The fire it seemed, had broken out in the bindery which was on the third floor of No. 30, and after a stream of water was played into the room the flames had been apparently overmastered having done a damage of about \$100. Then the engines returned to their houses, the firemen went home to sleep, leaving only two patrolmen to watch the entire double building.

But the flames had not been extinguished. The fire fiend had been scotched but not destroyed. Like a giant it lay back for some hours, only to gather strength for a new attack which was to be a fatal one. The fire which all the while, unknown to the patrolmen, had been smouldering under heaps of papers in the bindery, suddenly burst forth at about six o'clock of the morning of the third with overwhelming irresistible force. There is no fire more dangerous than the one which breaks out a second time and so it proved in this case. Several windows had been broken in the first fire and these let in a violent draught which fanned the flames to fury. Almost instantly, the entire upper stories of both buildings were one mass of fire and the patrolmen were forced to flee for their lives. A general alarm sounded and a dozen engines ordered to the scene of the conflagration, yet it was thought that the

whole block would fall a victim to the voracious, devouring elements. As it was, the firemen saw that both buildings occupied by the extensive establishment were doomed, and bent their energies to save the neighboring edifices from destruction. In this they were successful.

Our illustration gives a moderate idea of the scene presented to the view of the spectator at this moment. It was a terrible, yet a magnificent sight. The morning was clear and cold and the gale of the previous day had abated none of its fury. Aided and abetted by the icy wind, the flames shot forth like huge fiery serpents from the roof and windows struggling to reach the very heavens. Above the burning buildings a thick canopy of smoke hid from view the bright blue winter sky and spread a funeral pall over the scene and rendered the flames more lurid in appearance. The streets were blockaded by the engines, and around the spot a vast mass of people going to their daily toil had gathered, gazing awe-struck and with sorrowing hearts at the destruction of the establishment from which had issued, in unceasing flow, what had afforded them and their homes so much of instruction and delight, and wondering whether those favorite publications would be continued, or be buried beneath the ruins of their home.

About this time, Mr. N. L. Munro, the head of the firm, arrived at the scene of the disaster. One glance at the fiery monster that was devouring in a moment what it had cost him years to rear, and then he ejaculated: The fire can destroy everything, but it cannot take away from me the circulation which my papers have gained, or interrupt the delight with which each successive issue is hailed by the millions of my readers. This disaster shall not cause a moment's cessation or delay in the publication of a single number." His orders were quick, prompt and decisive. While the flames were still raging, his staff of authors were replacing the burnt manuscripts, his compositors were setting up type, his engravers, electrotypers, and pressmen were at work and, as every one put his shoulder to the wheel and worked with a will, the desired result had been happily accomplished.

No reader missed his particular favorite journal on the day when it should appear, and, as far as they were concerned, the misfortune produced for them neither disappointment, nor even inconvenience. We had

no doubt that our readers and those of the papers issuing from this establishment will appreciate the energy which enabled Mr. Munro, assisted by his efficient partner, Mr. Frank Tousey, to this miracle of undaunted pluck, and will reciprocate these efforts by urging their friends, and every one they know, to become readers of and subscribers to their paper, and thus roll up a circulation double, and even treble as much as it was before the fire.

The conflagration was finally, and this time effectually, extinguished at about 10 o'clock a.m., and then the ruins presented a truly beautiful appearance. As by the wand of a magician, the cold, cutting wind had converted the dripping water into stalactites of iridescent ice, and the front of the building, which remained standing, looked like a fairy grotto. Thousands of people passing by paused to look in admiration at the winter palace reared up before them as suddenly as was Aladdin's palace in the "Arabian Nights," and as exquisite in its weird beauty. But, alas? the beauty was all on the outside. The interior presented but a scene of havoc and desolation. The editorial room was the only apartment partially saved from the flames; the rest was chaos. A glance at the stock room presented but a mass of burnt and damaged books and paper. Proceeding upwards we next come to the electrotyping rooms and the bindery. Both these departments were wholly ruined, and all the costly machinery used here will have to be replaced anew. The next floor to this was occupied by Mr. Morris, compositor, and Mr. Orvens, foreman of the press-rooms. These were completely destroyed, and as for the top floors, occupied by Mr. Patterson, our engraver, and Mr. Jackson, the compositor, nothing but the burnt beams and the sky above stared us in the face.

To sum up everything the fire was a disaster which entailed a severe pecuniary loss upon Messrs. Munro & Co., but which in no wise injured their papers. Like the famed phoenix in the fable they arise from the ashes with renewed life, renewed courage, and renewed vigor. Let it be emphatically known that they still live, and that it takes more than a dozen such catastrophes to cow their indomitable spirit. Therefore, kind readers, let us all be thankful that no lives were lost by the disaster, and let us resolve, you as well as us, to do, in aiding

Messrs. N. L. Munro & Co., our utmost to make "The Family Story Paper," "The Weekly Story Teller," "The Boys of New York," and "Our Boys," even more successful than ever.

TONY HART, OF HARRIGAN & HART

The first glimpse of the above portrait remind us of the "Mulligan Guards" in all their glory as without the ludicrous antics and comic singing of Tony Hart, that famous song, and march, would lose half its charm. Tony Hart, the friend and partner of Ned Harrigan, is well known to all theatre-goers who love to look upon the funny side of human nature as depicted on the stage. There is not a boy in New York but knows him "like a book" and loves him like a brother, and all for the simple reason that Tony can sing well, and, more than that, is a young, good-looking fellow, with a kind heart — a heart that can feel for another. We believe Mr. Hart is now rustivating by the seaside, but soon our friends will have the pleasure of meeting him face to face upon the stage, in conjunction with his ever popular companion, Ned Harrigan. When that time arrives, perhaps somebody will laugh. We shall see.

MISS BESSIE TURNER

We publish on this page a letter from Miss Bessie Turner to Messrs. N. L. Munro & Co., who gives to the readers of The New York Weekly Story Teller, a picture of Miss Bessie Turner in their first number. Miss Bessie Turner is known, by name at least, to the greater portion of the reading public in this country and England through her connection with the Beecher-Tilton case. This young lady was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Tilton when she was very young, and received not only the advantages of a liberal education, but the influences of a refined and pleasant home. Her testimony during the trial was, to say the least, startling and decidedly prejudicial to Mr. Tilton, and thus she was again thrown entirely upon her own resources, which, we think, is more to her advantage than otherwise; for she has developed a very great talent for writing, if one can

judge from her first story which is in the possession of the publishers of The New York Weekly Story-Teller. With their characteristic energy, Messrs. N. L. Munro & Co., secured the services of Miss Turner at once, and her serial (which is one of the most exciting and interesting we have ever had the pleasure of reading), is the result of her labors since the close of the famous trial. The story is entitled "Circumstantial Evidence; or, The Verdict of Society," and we venture to predict that this story alone will secure an enormous number of readers to The New York Weekly Story-Teller, more especially since the paper itself is sold at a popular price of Five Cents. We advise all our readers to secure the first copy of The Weekly Story-Teller, and promise them that they will be amply repaid by a perusal of Miss Bessie Turner's more than wonderful story.

....WHAT DIME NOVELS ARE....

(A Memphis paper referring to a recent Dime Novel, written by a Memphis man, says of it and of Dime Novel Literature): "No wonder these publications succeed so well. The publisher pays the author a fair price for his work, while the publishers of magazines do not half nor quarter pay the writers that work for them, but grab all the profits and proceeds themselves. They look upon writers as drudges, and hence none but drudges will write for them. A good article is hardly ever found in a magazine now. They are unmitigated trash and nauseating drivel. The miserly and unfair dealing of those "respectable" publishers have driven all promising young writers away from their leaden literature, and consequently driven all readers except a few of the full, respectably heavy and stupid sort, who cling to old forms and old ghosts of things. This is the great cause of the decline, the atrophy of the magazine literature of the country. You might look in vain through the pages of magazines like Harpers for five years at a stretch, to find such a description of scenery as this": And then follows a long quotation from the novel.

Without advertising to the justice or injustice of the strictures on current magazine literature, we can say that "Beadles Dime Novels" series comprise more thoroughly good and sterling historic romance than any series ever issued in America, at any

price. These novels, prepared with exceeding care by authors of unquestioned merit, are a standing rebuke to those who pronounce all cheap books trashy and ephemeral. If Fenimore Cooper were today alive he would be called upon to write his best for the Dime Novel Series. We know it is the fashion in certain quarters to belittle this truly great series of National American Romance; but, considering the magnificent success of that series, the publishers can afford to pity these detractors, whose best excuse for their misstatements is their entire ignorance of the books they disparage. (This article was taken from the Badles' New York Saturday Star Journal, Volume 3, No. 155, February 29, 1873.)

STREET & SMITH ITEM

By J. Edward Leithead

Robert Emmett Owen was one of the artists for Street & Smith's colored cover weeklies. He did several covers for late issues of Diamond Dick, Jr., Weekly, two or three each for Nick Carter Weekly and Buffalo Bill Stories in the higher numbers, quite a few for Brave and Bold, and some for the S. & S. 15-cent libraries. He did most or all of the covers for Motor Stories, and the stories themselves were the work of W. Bert Foster. When the Boys of Liberty Library, published in paper-back form by Street & Smith, were issued in a cloth-bound edition of about 32 numbers by the publishing house of David McKay, Robert Emmett Owen and Charles L. Wrenn did many of the frontispieces which illustrated each volume.

BITS

By C. B. Hamilton

Tip Top Weekly, No. 273, Frank Merriwell's Glory; or The Greatest Triumph of all. Outside cover on inside.

Frank Merriwell's Glory; or, Last Triumph At Old Yale.

No. 274—Frank Merriwell's Surprise; or, The Contents of the Oil-skin Envelope, on the outside, and on the inside—Frank Merriwell's Surprise; or, The Secret of the Oil-skin Envelope.

No. 285—Cover does not fit the story. A baseball game on the cover. Should have been football. No baseball in story whatever.

PARTIAL LIST OF 1938 MEMBERS Nos.

21. Fred P. Pitzer, 41 Woodlawn Ave., Jersey City, N. J.
33. Kowalczyk Bros, 91 Ward St., Worcester, Mass.
38. Carl Linville, 2283 Loth St., Cincinnati, Ohio.
62. Lou Kohrt, 2947 N. 54th St., Milwaukee, Wis.
77. A. Willard Jaffery, Belvidere, Illinois.
101. J. H. Ambruster, 1458 Pensacola Ave., Chicago, Ill. (New Member.)

FORTUNES LEFT BY BRITISH WRITERS

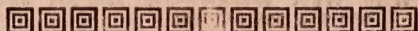
By Wm. J. Benners

Hall Caine—L250,000.
James Barrie—L173,000.
Kipling—L155,000.
Stanley Weyman—L99,000.
Thos. Hardy—L91,000.
Galesworthy—L 88,000.
Geo. Moore—L75,000.
Chas. Garvice—L71,000.
H. Rider Haggard—L61,000.
Charles Dickens—L80,000.
Anthony Trollope—L70,000.
Miss M. E. Braddon—L68,000.
Edsa Lyall—L 25,000.
Marie Corelli—L24,000.

Notice—It is understood that Joseph H. Grantham is operating under other names as well as his own, some of the names, Oscar Johnson, Herbert Lawson, etc., "Far West Library." If Mr. Grantham, alias Oscar Johnson, Herbert Lawson, and "Far West Library," keep on, they'll ruin the novel hobby. So, fellows, you had better look out for Mr. Joseph H. Grantham, alias Oscar Johnson of Lawnsdale, Calif., or you'll lose your novels.

Things seem to be booming in boy's paper circles in England just now, with the Newnes-Pearson group getting active, and the Amal. Press retaliating with the new Modern Boy, Wild West, and other boy's papers, etc.—Wm. H. Gander.

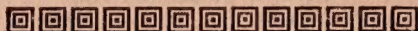
Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup will be eight years old, January, 1939, and I'm planning to have a real number this year, but must have support, in order to have a real number, like we all really want, so, "What do you say, fellows, if we all get together, and have a real honest-to-goodness 'Birthday Number.'" Ad rates are as follows: Full Page—\$2.00, Half Page—\$1.10, Quarter Page—75c. Let's make this number the BEST of them all.



CHRISTMAS GIFT-SUBSCRIPTION

Now's the Time To Give Your Friends a Gift For Christmas—or a chance to get other subscribers who may be interested, so here's your chance to get a little on the side. If you get Five New Members, send \$3.00 to me, and keep \$2.00 for your work, and you have your 1939 Subscription and Membership Free. Can you beat it? You have till February 1st, 1939.

RALPH F. CUMMINGS
Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A.



LIST OF NUMBERS OF NOVELS FOR SALE

Pluck & Luck—1154 1158 1204 1223
1227 1228 1234 1235 1254 1259 1261
1287.

Fame & Fortune—783 837 850 853 854
857 871 878 911 921 1006 1007 1032
1034 1044 1047 1048 1051 1054 1057
1060 1064 1068 1070 1075 1078 1080
1094 1107 1113 1135 1139 1150 1158

Wild West Weekly—949 950 951 952
954 955 958 961 962

Pluck & Luck—1290 1298 1301 1309
1313 1327 1334 1351 1363 1369 1381
1385 1391 1393 1401 1406 1423 1440
1448 1457 1458 1464 1470 1477 1478
1479 1480 1489 1491 1518 1520 1526
1530 1533 1534 1537 1585 1591 1599
1604

Leisure Hour Library—92 93 91 94 96
97 103 111 113 114 118 120 121 122
87 89 88 86 85 84 2 52 53 79 80 81
82

The Home Library—42

Harpers Young People—19 25 217 348
315 322 211 210 216 572 212 215 318
330 343

Work & Win—1179 1191 1194 1205 1221
1222 1225 1235 1250 1251 1277 1284
1288 1289 1295 1299 1301 1302 1305
1306 1309 1310

Harpers Weekly—542 543 557 596 584
613 691 693 696 727 730 733 767 769
789

Famous Fiction—220

ANY OF THE ABOVE AT 7c EACH

Fame & Fortune—473 475 479 480 484
485 486 487 489 491 520 709 761

Pluck & Luck—718 656 460

Work & Win—612 339 349 316 623

Tip Top—449 420 607 667

Dick Dobbs—7

ANY OF THESE AT 25c EACH

Dime Novel History—1. T. C. Har-
baugh—2. Capt. Frederick Whit-
aker. 10c EACH.

**Sahr's (Original) Frank Reade Li-
brary**—1. 25c.

RALPH F. CUMMINGS
Fisherville, Mass.

A SALE THAT IS A SALE

Beadles Banner Weekly—1885 to 1897
—Bound in $\frac{3}{4}$ Leather. Like
Brand New, complete issue. For
Sale. Make Offer. ●

Tip Top Weekly—Nos. 100 to 850—
About 720 novels. Very fine. \$200.

Scientific Americans—1890 to 1901—
Bound in $\frac{3}{4}$ Leather, like Brand
New, 52 issues per volume. 1886
to 1887 loose, 41 copies, for sale or
will trade even for novels.

MOSTACELLO

2714 Bainbridge Ave.
New York City, N. Y.

SUBJECT TO PRIOR SALE

All Around Weekly—Nos. 28 8 29—
75c each.

P. & L. No. 373—\$1.00; No. 65—146—
\$2.00 each.

Secret Service—Nos. 1253 1281—15c
each; 622—25c; 213—\$1.00.

Work and Win—No. 902—25c.

Brave and Bold—Nos. 35 118—\$1.00
each.

Police Gazette—Nov. 23, 1889—20c.

Boys of N. Y. Pocket Library—Nos.
218 175—\$2.00 each.

Young Klondike—No. 4—\$1.00.

Frank Reade Library—No. 81—\$1.75.

Detective Library—Nos. 666 560—\$1.75
each.

All novels guaranteed satisfactory.

ROY E. MORRIS
221—6th St. SW., Mason City, Iowa

INFORMATION WANTED

I lack only the following data to complete my lists of the Beadle publications, which are needed for bibliographic purposes. Any information will be appreciated. When the book is published it will be of greater value if there are no missing titles.

Beadle's Half-Dime Library. Name of author, title and sub-title of Nos. 1166, 1169.

Beadle's Fifteen Cent Novels. Names of authors and titles of the whole series except Nos. 21 and 22. Does anyone possess any copy before No. 21?

Beadle's Standard Library of Romance. Authors and titles of all EXCEPT Nos. 2, 3, and 4.

Beadle's American Sixpenny Publications (London edition of the yellow-backs.) Were there more than 68 published?

Beadle's Boy's Books of Romance and Adventure. Are there any numbers higher than 21?

Irwin's American Novels. Names of authors of Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 22, 24, and 29. Names of authors as well as titles and sub-titles of Nos. 21, 27, 28, and 31.

Would also like to have data on the publications of Beadle before 1860, in Buffalo. He published **The Youth's Casket** and **The Home Monthly** (the latter is NOT Beadle's Monthly, published later.) I need dates of beginning and ending of these two publications.

Information relative to Beadle authors also desired.

Dr. Albert Johannsen, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

BARGAIN SALE

MAGNET LIBRARY (Miscellaneous)

7 10 22 27 29 33 178 365 395 399 435 443 477 483

MEDAL LIBRARY (Miscellaneous)

89 118 153 157 326 372 379 394 496 711 832 834 836 838 840 842

MEDAL LIBRARY (Merriwell Stories)

152 217 233 237 304 328 352 365 374 389 401 410 473 566 578 653
696 700 706 710 714 736 738 748 752 756 774 776 778 794 796
798 800 804 810 818 820 822 828 846 848 850 852 855 857

NEW MAGNET LIBRARY (Nick Carter Stories)

1067 1100 1106 1109 1112 1124 1126 1133 1141 1146 1154 1160 1169
1207 1211 1217 1294 1300 1302 1304 1307 1318 1322 1327 1334 1345
1357 1358

BUFFALO BILL BORDER STORIES

39 41 42 45 47 50 51 52 53 56 59 60 61 62 63 65 67 74 129 132 134
137 138 139 159 164 196

Will Sell any of the above at 5 CENTS EACH

TIP TOP WEEKLY (Merriwell Stories)

566 to 683 inclusive.

All in Good Condition 12 CENTS PER COPY

WIDE AWAKE LIBRARY (Jack Harkaway Stories)

1225 to 1253. All in fine condition.

35 Cents Per Copy OR THE LOT FOR \$9.00

BEADLE'S SATURDAY JOURNALS (1876)

314 317 318 319 320 321 325 349 350 351 352

BEADLE'S BANNER WEEKLY

(1888) 313 314 318 319 320
 (1889) 327 333 334 335 340 341 342 345 347 348 349 351 352
 354 367
 (1890) 378 379 383 385 390 396 397 398 402 406 407 408 409 410
 411 413
 (1891) 472 473 474 475
 (1892) 478 484 485 489 490

All in fair to good condition **30 CENTS PER COPY**

BLACK BESS OR THE KNIGHT OF THE ROAD. (English)

1 to 6 8 12 to 17 19 to 36 37 to 41 43 44 47 48 50 52 53 55 56 58
 59 62 to 164 166 167 168 169 171 173 174 179 to 240 243 to 252

A few loose in the binding, otherwise in good shape—

6 Cents Per Copy.....OR \$11.00 FOR THE LOT

FRANK LESLIE'S BOYS' & GIRLS' WEEKLY

Numbers—

Volume 5—114 116 117 118 121 122 123 124 125 127 128 129
 Volume 8—185 188 189 190 191 192 193 197 199 201 203 204 206 207
 Volume 9—210 211 215 221 224 225 226 227 229 230 232 233
 Volume 10—237 241 242 246 249 251 252 253 254 255 256 258 259
 Volume 13—314 317 318 320 322 323 325 328 329 331 332 333 336 337 338
 Volume 14—339 340 341 342 344 345 347 349 349 352 353 354 355 356 357
 360 363 364
 Volume 15—369 380 382 389
 Volume 16—391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 401 402 403 404 405 406
 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 416
 Volume 17—417 418 419 420 421 422 423 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432
 433 434 435 436 438
 Volume 18—444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455
 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468
 Volume 19—469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 481 481
 632 633 634 637 638 639
 Volume 20—495 496 497 498 499 500 503 505 507 508 510 511 512 513 514
 515 516 517 518 520
 Volume 21—521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 531 532 534 535 536 537
 Volume 22—540 542 543 544 545 550 552 554 555 557 559 560 561
 562 563 564
 Volume 23—565 567 572 583 584 586 587 588 589 590 592
 Volume 24—593 594 595 596 597 598 600 601 602 604 605 607 608 609 610
 611 613 614 616
 Volume 25—617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631
 632 633 634 637 638 639
 Volume 28—696 698 708 709 710
 Volume 29—724 727 730 731 732 735 741 742 745 746
 Volume 30—747 748 750 751 755 756 757 758 759 762 765
 Volume 31—773 774 775 777 778 780 781 782 783 784 786 787 788 789 790
 791 794 795 797
 Volume 32—802 805 809 810 811 812 813 814 816 817 818 819 820 821 822
 824
 Volume 33—825 826 827 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 840 841 842
 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850
 Volume 34—851 852 853 855 857 858 859 860 863 864 867 868 870 872 873
 These copies run from FAIR to EXCELLENT — mostly
 the latter. Will sell single copies—

At 25 Cents Per Copy.....OR \$80.00 FOR THE LOT

FRANK LESLIE'S POPULAR MONTHLY-BOUND VOLUMES

Numbers 1 to 17 inclusive 28 32 33 34 35 38 39 45 46 49

Binding a trifle worn on some, but otherwise in splendid condition.

Will Sell At60 CENTS PER VOLUME

P. C. MAROSKE

4133—57TH STREET,

WOODSIDE,

NEW YORK